

# THE LEISURE HOUR.

BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,  
AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND.—*Crozier.*



MRS. CHAMBERLAIN DETERMINES TO BE CIVIL.

## NINE-TENTHS OF THE LAW.

BY THE REV. T. S. MILLINGTON, AUTHOR OF "BOY AND MAN,"  
"LOMBARDY COURT," ETC.

### CHAPTER XXII.—GOOD FOR EVIL.

He that wrongs his friend  
Wrongs himself more, and ever bears about  
A silent court of justice in his breast,  
Himself the judge and jury, and himself  
The prisoner at the bar, ever condemned;  
And that drags down his life.

—Tennyson.

No. 1475.—APRIL 3, 1880.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN did not return immediately to his books and his figures after John Brownlow had for the second time quitted the office. He stood at the window with his hands in his pockets, and a gloomy expression of countenance, and saw the farmer leave the yard upon his horse and proceed at a foot's pace down the road. He judged rightly that Brownlow was troubled at heart about the result of his visit; he knew that he must have had a hard struggle with himself before he could

PRICE ONE PENNY.

have resolved upon giving up his home, and that already the thought of what he had done must be causing him deep distress. Yet he could not help thinking over Mr. Brownlow's last words—"I would rather be in my place than in yours."

Certainly Mr. Brownlow had behaved very handsomely. Mr. Chamberlain felt that he could not have acted so himself. If he had been ever so much disposed to waive a right of such a nature, the thought of having to answer for it to Mrs. Chamberlain would have been quite sufficient to prevent it. Mrs. Brownlow also had a spirit, and had shown it in reference to this very question. What would she say to her husband? how would he be able to face her? Whatever his thoughts might have been at any other time, Mr. Chamberlain could not help feeling that, just at that moment, he would rather be in his own place than in Mr. Brownlow's. He might have remembered that Brownlow had spoken in his wife's name, and with her authority; but he could not believe it possible that Mrs. Brownlow had really agreed with him to make such a sacrifice, or that she would quietly consent to it afterwards if she had done so.

"I wish I had never sent the notice," said Chamberlain to himself, as he watched Brownlow down the street and saw him turn the corner, still walking his horse and hanging his head pensively. "It is too late to recall it now, of course; the thing is settled, and it would be ridiculous to undo all that has been done. Besides, Mrs. Chamberlain would be so disappointed and annoyed. But I wish it had never been sent."

He took two or three turns in the room, biting his lip unconsciously. He felt sorry and ashamed as he thought of all that had passed. What would the neighbours say about it? Of course, they would all be told how well Mr. Brownlow had behaved, and how badly he had requited him. The tenants would hear of it and talk of it, and pass their own opinions about it. It would be a common topic in private and in public, in the fields, at the market ordinary, and at the church door. Invidious comparisons would everywhere be drawn between Mr. Brownlow's conduct and his own.

All this was to be expected, and it would serve him right. He could not deny that Mr. Brownlow's behaviour had been painfully good, and his own just the contrary. If Brownlow had resented his treatment, and set him at defiance, he would not have cared for him; he would then have carried out his own plans without any hesitation; but the kind and friendly attitude which Brownlow persisted in maintaining, unmoved, except for a moment now and then, by any feeling of anger against himself or his wife for the injury they were doing him, perplexed and worried him.

He felt also that Mr. Brownlow while acting thus was quite aware of the magnanimous part which he had taken up, that he felt himself the better man of the two, and that he would not have yielded so readily if he had not expected to come out of the affair with more real satisfaction in the end than his oppressors would derive even from the attainment of their wishes. Mr. Brownlow was too loud in his professions of friendship, too ready to forgive—as if he felt that there was a great deal to be forgiven. He had talked of rendering good for evil, and of doing him a good turn whenever it should be in his power. Mr. Chamberlain did not want his "good turns." Above all,

Mr. Brownlow persisted in shaking hands with him at the church door, and would, no doubt, continue to do so, and do it more than ever, looking him sternly in the face the while, as if calling heaven and earth to-witness it. All this might be very well meant, but Mr. Chamberlain was annoyed by it; it placed him at a disadvantage, and he was half persuaded that Mr. Brownlow did it with that intention, and triumphed over him secretly in the consciousness of his own superiority.

Nevertheless, the incident of the notice, accepted by Mr. Brownlow for the sake of peace when it was of no legal force, made a great impression upon Mr. Chamberlain. He was not naturally a hard-hearted man; and even while he persisted in his own course, was sorry for Mr. and Mrs. Brownlow. He wished there had been no such failure on Franklin's part, and then Brownlow would have had no such opportunity of displaying his magnanimity. He resolved to give Franklin "the rough side of his tongue" as soon as he should have an opportunity. He was vexed also with Mrs. Chamberlain. She ought to have been satisfied with the house provided for her. It was all her doing that Brownlow was to be turned out. He was still more angry with "that woman Spilby;" he believed it was as much her fault as any one's. She was always complaining, and Mrs. Chamberlain listened to her, and allowed herself to be persuaded. He was spitefully disposed even towards the dog which fawned upon him as he walked across the room, though the dog had had neither part nor lot in the matter. In a word, he was dissatisfied with himself; and when that is the case a man need not go far to find occasion for complaint.

A comfortable dinner, and the cheerful view which Mrs. Chamberlain was prepared to take of the situation, made him feel much more contented before night. Mrs. Chamberlain looked upon the Goshen as her future home now; she was under the impression that the notice had been duly served, and was in high good-humour. She had provided for dinner a calf's head, her husband's favourite dish, as a token of her approval and as a reward for his compliance with her wishes. It was a trifle, to be sure; but it pleased him, especially as he understood her motive. She never gave him calf's head except when she had gained a point, or had a point to gain. He could not help thinking, when he saw it on the table, what a scene there would have been if he had had to tell her, after all, that the notice had not been served, and that she could not have the house. He felt grateful to Brownlow for relieving him of such a necessity. It really was very good of him, he said to himself; and he must try and make it up to him somehow or other.

After dinner, feeling pretty comfortable, he told his wife all that had passed; but, to his surprise, she did not seem as much surprised with Mr. Brownlow's magnanimity as he had been. It was unpardonable of Franklin, she said, to be so careless. He ought to be dismissed. They were to receive, then, as a favour what ought to have been theirs by right. Well, it did not much signify. The Brownlows knew what they were about, no doubt. It was all very well to claim credit to themselves for giving up the house quietly, but they would have had to go at last, and it was prudent of them not to make enemies, or they might not have had another house to go to, or another farm to cultivate. They had made a virtue of necessity, and had shown their good sense in doing

so. It was a good thing, for some reasons, that matters had taken this course. She had feared that Mrs. Brownlow would have been very disagreeable and unaccommodating; she was glad, for Mrs. Brownlow's sake as well as for her own, that she had thought better of it.

The next day was Sunday; but Mr. Chamberlain said he would not go to church; he had symptoms of a cold, and would stay at home and nurse it. He did not want to have a scene with Mr. Brownlow at the church door again so soon. Mrs. Chamberlain could go, and she would meet the Brownlows, but that was a different thing. She could bow to them and pass on. She had a way of her own of bowing to people, which precluded familiarities.

But Mrs. Chamberlain had no intention of keeping Mrs. Brownlow at a distance. On the contrary, she resolved to be very civil to her, and to behave to her as if nothing had happened. If the Brownlows showed themselves annoyed, as it was natural they might be, Mrs. Chamberlain would know how to make allowances. She would not be offended with them. It would be so much more convenient and pleasant, now that she had gained her point about the Goshen, to continue on friendly terms with the Brownlows. As for Mr. Chamberlain, he must not be too sensitive. She should do what she could to smooth matters over, and he must do the same.

There was a great deal of smoothing to be done, however, in the course of the next six months; and it was due much more to the evenness of Mrs. Brownlow's temper than to Mrs. Chamberlain's consideration or good taste that matters went on as quietly as they did. Mr. Brownlow, in spite of the hints which his wife gave him, lost no opportunity of manifesting his goodwill towards the steward, to the great annoyance of the latter; while Mrs. Brownlow's amiability was proved chiefly by her passive submission to many little civilities, not to say intrusions, on the part of Mrs. Chamberlain.

That lady smiled most graciously upon Mrs. Brownlow as she overtook her near the church, offered her her hand, and walked by her side, chatting familiarly about the weather. She shook hands also with Mr. Brownlow, who looked at her with amazement, and however anxious to show himself polite, could not think of anything to say in answer to her remarks. He felt angry with her for being in such good spirits. He had forgiven her, of course; but she ought not so soon to have forgiven herself. One might have supposed, from her manner, that there had been nothing to forgive. John Brownlow returned from church in a less amiable frame of mind than when he went thither. He had intended to shake hands with Mr. Chamberlain, instead of which Mrs. Chamberlain had shaken hands with him. Some people would not, perhaps, have understood the difference; but John Brownlow did, and felt it keenly.

A few days later, however, he had an opportunity of manifesting his benevolent disposition towards the steward. Walking along the road from Dulborough he saw Mr. Chamberlain crossing one of the fields by a footpath, and tending towards the same point which he was himself approaching. Mr. Brownlow had no idea of turning out of his course in order to avoid him. Such meetings were not pleasant, to be sure, but he had no reason for his part to be shy of Mr. Chamberlain, and if the latter could not look him in the face that was his own fault. So the farmer kept on his way, resolved to meet his neigh-

bour and shake hands with him as usual, whether he liked it or not.

Mr. Chamberlain apparently did not like it; for as soon as he observed Mr. Brownlow approaching he altered his course, affecting not to see him, and instead of making for the gate, which would have brought him to the road, walked across the field in a different direction and jumped over a hedge. Mr. Brownlow was not at all sorry. But as Chamberlain had disappeared from view altogether, he wondered what could have become of him, and was not a little amused at the thought that he was probably hiding under the hedge in order to escape him.

"Poor man!" he said to himself. "I'll let him know that he has no reason to get out of my way. I don't bear him any malice;" and turning into the field at the spot where Chamberlain ought to have turned out of it, he walked towards the place where he had last seen him. Mr. Chamberlain was there, indeed; but seated on the ground and in great pain, having sprained his ankle in the jump that he had made through the hedge; and, although he at first declined Mr. Brownlow's offer of assistance, and tried to stand upright, and to limp a few yards with the help of his stick, it was evident that he could never make his way home to Windy Gorse without assistance.

"Let me fetch my trap for you," said Brownlow.

"No, thank you," was the answer.

"I won't be long gone; sit here while I run home and get it; we are nearer my house than yours. I can put my mare in harness directly and bring her down."

"No, thank you. No."

"But you can't walk?"

"Yes I can, if you will only let me alone. I shall be better soon, and can get home without any difficulty."

"I can't leave you in this state," said Brownlow; "you, of all men in the world."

"Why not?" Mr. Chamberlain asked, sharply.

Mr. Brownlow did not reply. He had spoken his thoughts when it would have been better to have concealed them; but he would not say any more.

"Why not?" Mr. Chamberlain repeated, in a surly tone. "Why me, in particular?"

"Well," said Brownlow, "I'd rather not tell you."

Mr. Chamberlain groaned.

"Are you in much suffering?" the other asked.

"Let me take off your boot; let me—"

"No, thank you. I tell you I can get home alone, if you will only go away and leave me."

"I can't leave you," said Brownlow, "so helpless and in pain."

"Why not?" Mr. Chamberlain asked again, in a despairing tone.

"Why not? why, you would not leave me in such a plight, would you?"

"No, I wouldn't, that's true enough," Mr. Chamberlain replied, and he said it heartily, as if he meant it.

"That's my reason, then," said Brownlow. "So now, if, as you say, you can walk, lean on my arm, and if not, I'll go and fetch my horse and trap."

"I can walk," said Chamberlain; "it's not so very bad."

He rose with difficulty, and tried to hobble along, and took Mr. Brownlow's arm, leaning upon him heavily, in spite of his efforts to avoid doing so.



It was but a short distance to Dulborough, and when he arrived there several people came forward to offer him assistance. Mr. Chamberlain tried to withdraw his arm that he might lean on some one else, but Brownlow would not relinquish it. So they walked on together down the street, while the cottagers and others stood at their doors looking on with evident surprise, and whispering one to another.

Presently Billy Fidd came shuffling by, and taking up his favourite position a little in advance, walked along, with his old battered hat on one side of his head, looking back from time to time, and pointing to the two men as they made their way slowly through the village. "Look at 'em," said Billy; "there they are; here they come; there they go, arm-in-arm, like brothers; look at 'em; arm-in-arm, like brothers—brothers; look at 'em; there they are; here they come; there they go, arm-in-arm, like brothers—brothers."

More than once Mr. Chamberlain, chafing under the general attention which poor Billy Fidd persisted in directing towards him, as if he had been a public showman, thanked Mr. Brownlow and assured him he was all right and would rather go on alone, but the only answer he received was an expression of the warmest sympathy, an anxious inquiry whether he was still in much pain, or an exhortation to lean more heavily upon him. More than once the steward, contradicting his former professions, sat down to rest at a cottage door, resolving to remain there till his too officious friend should have left him. But Mr. Brownlow would not be shaken off; he stood by the steward's chair, with tender solicitude and patience, and refused to leave him till he should be safe under his own roof. There were plenty of able-bodied men ready to accompany him home, and he was not really so much hurt but that he might have crawled thither alone. But Mr. Brownlow would not give up his place to any one, and Mr. Chamberlain was obliged to continue his progress leaning upon his arm. The villagers looked at each other meaningly, and some of them gave expression to their thoughts in tones loud enough to be overheard. It was an edifying sight, they all agreed, and must make Mr. Chamberlain feel very queer after the way he had behaved to Mr. Brownlow. It was a Christian-like thing to do, rendering good for evil, and Mr. Brownlow was a Christian, and had always behaved himself as such. When one of them remarked to his wife that Mr. Chamberlain seemed to be in a great deal of pain, judging by the look of him, she answered, "Well he might! it was like 'coals of fire' upon his head."

She was right; but there are fires that harden as well as fires that melt, and the effect of Mr. Brownlow's fire upon the steward was only to render him more angry than before with the man whom he had injured, and whom, as a natural consequence, he disliked. The rustics who watched the ill-matched couple in their progress through the village little thought that Mr. Chamberlain, instead of being overwhelmed with a sense of his neighbour's kindness, was secretly gnashing his teeth and wishing that "the fellow" would take himself off. He would rather have lain by the roadside all day than be thus conspicuously helped along it by Mr. Brownlow; and if he regretted that he had taken steps for turning the good farmer out of his house—which, to do him justice, he sometimes did—he regretted still more just then that he was not able to send him away to a distant part of the estate, or out of the county altogether.

He arrived at the narrow door of Windy Gorse house at last, still leaning, in spite of himself, upon "his neighbour," and there Mr. Brownlow left him suddenly, refusing all acknowledgments and thanks. Mr. Chamberlain limped into his house, suffering even more from pain of mind than of body, smarting rather from his mortified feelings than from the injury to his ankle. Not only did he feel exasperated against poor Mr. Brownlow for the assistance he had rendered, but he looked upon him as, in some sort, the cause of his accident.

"If that man had not been coming along the road just at that moment, and carrying his head so high, after his manner," he said to his wife, who was looking on while Spilby bathed his foot, "I should not have tried to avoid him, and then this would not have happened. The least he could have done afterwards might have been to let me alone when I told him to do so, and not to make a spectacle of me all through the village."

"I am glad he brought you home, though," Mrs. Chamberlain replied, "as there was no one else to do it; else you might have been sitting under the hedge now. He meant it kindly; and," she added, after a pause, "it was kind. Not many in his place would have done it."

"Why not?" Mr. Chamberlain asked, angrily.

"Oh, because—because—oh, you know why as well as I do."

Mr. Chamberlain set his teeth together, but did not speak. 'Twas too bad, he thought, too bad altogether, for his wife also to reproach him, as she seemed to do by implication. It was for her sake alone that he had behaved so unkindly, as every one knew he had, towards Mr. Brownlow. Nay, it was her doing entirely, from first to last. Yet now she was ready to join with all the rest of the world in casting a reproach upon him! Mrs. Chamberlain's "cut" was the unkindest cut of all.

"I wish I had never had anything to do with that fellow," he said, bitterly. "I wish he had left me lying in the ditch. I wish he would mind his own business and let me alone!"

But although he spoke thus in the moment of his anger, it is probable that better and kinder feelings prevailed in his heart after he had had leisure to reflect.

### The Happy Season.

THE season that I love the best of all,  
Is when sweet April sobs her life away,  
And weeping dies upon the breast of May.  
When luscious cowslips bloom and oxlips tall;  
When mated songsters warble, coo, and call,  
From greening hedgerows all the lengthening  
day;  
When frisking lambs on daisied hillocks play,  
And cattle bask where genial sunbeams fall,  
Flash the bright streams, valleys and wood-  
lands ring,  
All nature revels then in life's excess,  
Her cup o'erflows with newborn happiness,  
Spring's glamour falleth upon everything.  
Blossom fair flowers in every sunny spot;  
Ah! sad the spirit that rejoiceth not.

JOHN ASKHAM.



## CURIOSITIES OF COMMERCE AND TRADE.

### II.—THE TEA TRADE.

ONE of the principal fountain-heads of our English tea trade is an unobtrusive and rather dull-looking pile of buildings in Cutler Street, just off Bishopsgate Street. There is about four acres of land covered—excepting only the necessary open spaces and roadways for vehicles to bring in and carry out goods—by warehouses which, with their basement floors, stand seven storeys high. They are the “up-town” bonded premises of the London and St. Katherine’s Dock Company. Vast wealth is always hidden away in these buildings, and it is continually rolling in and rolling out again; but so little attention does the place ordinarily attract, that people have been known to be living in the neighbourhood for a good part of a lifetime and yet to be unaware of the nature of the business carried on here.

All the tea that comes into England is now unshipped in the port of London; and in London these warehouses are the largest devoted to the reception of tea. It is not exclusively tea that is stored here. Part of the space is devoted to raw silk, silk in the piece, and cochineal; but about two-thirds of the flooring is devoted to the trade we are considering, and a good deal of tea is also warehoused at another similar establishment belonging to this company in the vicinity of the docks. Between the two departments probably from twenty to twenty-five per cent. of the whole trade of the country draws its supplies from these stores.

It is particularly appropriate that these Cutler Street warehouses should be the largest dépôt of the trade. The buildings were bought by their present owners from the old East India Company, by whom, as we have most of us heard, tea was originally introduced into England. The directors in 1664 made a present of two pounds of it to Queen Catherine, the wife of Charles II, and three years later made a grand importation of the article, no doubt on the strength of the popularity which her Majesty’s patronage of the new beverage had secured among the aristocracy. They brought over nearly 5,000 lb. of it, but this quantity appears to have been sufficient for the next seven years. That, it will be observed, was a little more than two centuries ago—1664. The exact quantity in that year was 4,713 lb. In 1864, just two centuries after, the exact quantity brought into England was 124,359,243 lb.; and in 1878 the importations of tea, of all sorts, according to the returns of the Board of Trade, amounted to the enormous quantity of 204,872,899 lb. In 1879 the quantity was somewhat less, apparently. A circular issued by a leading authority in the trade, gives the total amount for the year at 184,077,000 lb., of which 6,637,000 lb. was green tea.

The pound weight, it should be observed, is the unit in the tea trade. Pounds and packages are the only quantities recognised, the “package” being the

box, half-chest, and chest. They are not very definite terms, apparently, the quantity of tea contained in them varying with the various parts of the tea-growing world they come from. But approximately it may be said that the “box” contains 20 lb., the “half-chest” 50 lb., and the “chest” 100 lb. Through these tea warehouses of the London and St. Katherine’s Dock Company about a million such packages pass in the year. Last year there were over a million. There were of the medium-size packages, or half-chests, 490,525; of the whole chests, 161,485; and of the boxes, 355,546. Thus it appears that the tea passing through this one company’s hands annually would amount to nearly 50,000,000 lb.—enough to give every one of the 4,000,000 people in London—men, women, and children—twelve or thirteen pounds each, or very nearly enough to give two pounds to every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom.

This then is one of the great reservoirs from which it was computed in 1869 that about 177,000 retail dealers throughout the kingdom were supplied, and for the most part the place is as still and quiet as reservoirs usually are. In one way and another about the premises there are some 600 men employed. Many of them, however, are day labourers, who are only called in as required. But, however numerous may be the hands at work, the vast floors of these buildings always look more or less lonely and deserted. One passes up bleak stone staircases and through silent passages formed by piles of “packages,” and he may easily lose himself if he venture in without a guide. The quiet, however, is not everywhere undisturbed. Here, for instance, as we turn this corner and come towards the end of a long floor, there is a little scene of bustle and activity strangely in contrast with the general aspect of the place. A consignment of tea has just arrived from some ship lying in the docks, and it is being hauled up into this top floor by a small steam-engine working a crane. As every package is swung in from the ground below, a labourer runs a stout little truck underneath it, and bowls it off into an adjacent floor, where it is being stacked in piles, or “beds,” as they are termed, each “bed” being the quantity represented in a single invoice. On these same little vehicles packages that have been previously received are at the same time being trundled into another part of the floor, where a pair of scales are suspended from the ceiling near a double desk, on one side of which is seated an officer of the dock company, and on the other an officer with a gold crown on his cap, indicating that he is from the Custom House. He is here, of course, to see that her Majesty gets a full sixpence duty on every pound that comes in. There are three men at the scale, one to look after the weights and two to suspend every package from the

y Gorse  
elf, upon  
left him  
thanks.  
suffering  
, smart-  
from the  
asperated  
e he had  
me sort,

the road  
so high,  
s looking  
not have  
not have  
afterwards  
d him to  
d through

gh,” Mrs.  
e else to  
under the  
he added,  
his place

angrily.  
hy as well

ut did not  
bad alto-  
he seemed  
alone that  
knew he  
her doing  
was ready  
casting a  
“cut” was

with that  
d left me  
l his own

ment of his  
er feelings  
leisure to

l,  
away,  
of May.  
os tall;  
call,  
engthening

locks play,  
s fall,  
and wood-

ness,  
anything.  
ot;

ASKHAM.

other end of the beam, which has not the usual little square platform for the reception of the article to be weighed, but instead of this dangles two pairs of iron hooks. As the little truck runs its load underneath the beam these four hooks are thrust beneath the package, two on each side, and the scale itself thus lifts the burden from the vehicle. The weighing is done very rapidly, and trucks keep running to and fro with a merry rattle and rumble sufficient in itself to prove with absolute certainty that all this work is done "by the piece." So much is paid for every hundred packages weighed, and the smarter everybody is the sooner the money is earned. Round about the scales, therefore, everybody is at high pressure, and ten or a dozen men make as much shouting and uproar as might serve for the whole establishment on weekly wages. As every package comes towards the scale there is a shout of the merchant's shipping mark, the kind of tea, and certain numbers that have been scrawled on in chalk before it reached here. At the same time a man who stands ready with a queer little implement, spoken of as an "iron," dextrously cuts the date on every box. Another scribbles a "consecutive number" in chalk, and then comes the weighing. The result is shouted out to the two officers, who both make an entry of it, the actual weight being at the same time marked upon the package, first by one of the men at the scales, who stands ready with a piece of chalk, and afterwards by another, who "scribes" it into the wood with an "iron." The package is dropped on to another little truck, and away it runs to be stored away "in bond." Sometimes 500,000 or 600,000 such packages are warehoused here at one and the same time. No duty has been paid on this tea as yet, but the duty will have to be paid before it can be removed. Samples may, however, be drawn. For this purpose every package will be opened. On an adjacent floor a large number of the packages are ranged in rows with the lids off, and a hole cut in the lead-foil in which the tea is packed inside the case. As the dock people say, they are "laid down" for inspection by the tea brokers. Previous to this, however, every "chop" of tea—every consignment of a sort, that is—will have undergone examination by officers appointed by the Custom House.

This is required by a special proviso in an Act of Parliament passed in 1875, in consequence of the discovery of some more than usually audacious attempts to foist upon the market immense quantities of the vilest rubbish in the semblance of tea. There can be no question that legislation was imperatively called for. A great amount of roguery had been practised on the imbibers of "tea," many of whom had been more or less poisoned by black-lead, oxide of iron, Prussian blue, turmeric, and various other substances intended to impart a fictitious appearance, or to help out the weight. The strongest impulse to this kind of thing was given, apparently, by the high import duties imposed upon the genuine article. High Custom duties naturally stimulated smuggling and prompted every species of adulteration, and the decoctions with which poor John Bull was often dosed, while he fondly imagined himself to be refreshing and invigorating his system, would no doubt have been nauseous enough if he had not paid a good price for the mysterious rubbish and its Chinese name. "Millions of pounds' weight of sloe, liquorice, and ash leaves are every year mixed with China teas in England," re-

ported one Parliamentary committee; and these, no doubt, were among the least objectionable adulterants employed both here and abroad. A good many legislative efforts were made at one time and another to put down these practices, but apparently without much success. In 1875 previous enactments were repealed, and a clause in the Food and Drugs Act passed that year required the Commissioners of Customs to appoint persons to examine all teas imported. They are to take samples wherever they consider it necessary, and they are to have these samples analysed "with all convenient speed." The Commissioners, on receiving the report of these analyses, are to exercise their discretion with respect to the stock the samples represent. During 1878 639 samples were submitted to examination. Of these, 592 were dismissed as not coming within the scope of the Act, and 47 were reported to be doubtful or bad. Ultimately there were four of them, representing only six packages, condemned to be destroyed as unfit for human food; the rest were allowed to go into the market. In every case during 1878, as well as in the preceding year, the report of the analyst stated, "the principal, if not the only, adulterant was exhausted tea-leaves"—tea, that is, that had already done duty in somebody's pot, and then had been dried and mixed with good tea. It would be rash to affirm that this is now the only mode of adulterating. If we are not misinformed, there are yet to be found ingenious proprietors of very private establishments in the east of London who can perform prodigies of skill in renovating damaged tea, converting worthless black into marketable green, or unsaleable green into a very passable black. Attention was called recently to an importation of 10,000,000 lb. of tea that had found its way into the market, and which, it is asserted, the Chinamen had hastily manufactured to meet a sudden activity in the trade in lower class teas. It does not appear to be exactly an adulterated article, but rather "tea" with scarcely any leaf in it—just the stalks and twigs and other such rubbish as we may suppose would be picked out from good tea; yet it was sold by some retailers at 1s. 4d. a pound. It is, however, a very general opinion that the adulteration of teas is all but abandoned. No green tea "faced" with Prussian blue is imported now, or if there is any facing, it is very slight indeed, and only in rare instances. "Lie tea" is a thing of the past, and retail dealers seem very generally to have abandoned the birch brooms and iron filings and renovated tea-leaves with which they used to be twitted, and to have taken to "blending" for the best of their profits.

The art and mystery of "blending" teas so as to yield the largest amount of profit and tickle the greatest number of palates is, we fear, far too recondite for us to venture on. The various kinds of tea, however, upon which the retail dealer exercises his ingenuity is a subject somewhat less profound, and the floor of the bonded warehouses in which the packages are "laid down" for inspection seems to be a convenient place for a word or two on the varieties.

Before noticing the different kinds of tea, however, we ought to say a word or two on the different cases in which they are packed, since they indicate a very important change in the source of our teas of late years. Until some twenty or thirty years ago China was the only country sending us teas, and these warehouses here would have presented only one



kind of "package." They would all have been the receptacles with which everybody is familiar—the thin, hard, wooden boxes, covered with oily-looking paper, enigmatical inscriptions, and curious pictures of natives of the Celestial Empire. These still constitute by far the larger number; but for the past twenty years there has been a continually increasing proportion of packages of quite another appearance. They are plain chests of teak-wood mainly, and are occasionally covered when they arrive here with a species of canvas. The papered boxes contain China teas; the others Indian teas, which now constitute about a fourth part of our entire supply, and in all probability will eventually entirely supersede the China importations.

Of China teas, the principal sorts with which the retail tradesman has to conjure—all the "blending" or mixing of sorts is done by the retail dealers—are represented on these floors in large quantities. There are, as everybody knows, black teas and green, and innumerable as are the various kinds and qualities presented in shops, there are here not more than about four varieties of each of these. The great bulk of the black tea here is either Moning or Kaisow, both of which are Congou teas. Moning, in the wholesale market, fetches from 1s. 0½d. to 2s. 3d. per lb., according to its quality. Kaisow sells at from about 11d. to 2s. Besides these two there is scented orange Pekoe, which realises from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 7d. per lb., and scented Caper, worth about 10d. to 1s. 9d. per lb. Of China green teas there is first of all Gunpowder, which ranges in price from 11d. to 2s. 7d., and very fine qualities will sometimes fetch as much as 3s. 4d. in the market. Another principal kind is Imperial Gunpowder, a large round leaf, which sells at about 1s. to 1s. 4d. the lb. Besides these there is Hyson, worth from 1s. 3d. to 2s. and 2s. 1d., and Young Hyson, which goes at 10d. to 1s. 11d. per lb.\*

China has been a tea-growing and a tea-drinking country nobody knows exactly how long. According to Mr. Wray it has something like 25,000,000 acres devoted to the shrub, and within their own borders this same authority computes that they consume annually not less than 2,000,000,000 lb., a quantity which makes our poor little 204,000,000—a good deal of which we export, by the way—look, after all, very puny and ridiculous, and very likely accounts in part for the contemptuous estimate of us which it is notorious the Celestials are always found to entertain. They can get through 2,000 cups of tea, while we, poor savages, so rudimentary is our civilisation, and so insignificant are our numbers, cannot as yet manage more than 204! With such a trade within their own borders the Chinese may be able, perhaps, to look with tolerable equanimity at the gradual supersession of their exports to us. But whether they can or not, India seems likely to become our chief source of tea. The shrub was well known to be growing wild in Assam long before attempts were made to cultivate it there. This, of course, showed that the climate was adapted to it,

and in 1836 efforts for its culture on a large scale were organised under the direction of Dr. Royle and Dr. Falconer. The indigenous Assam plant was placed under cultivation, and commissioners were sent to China to obtain seeds and tools and skilled workpeople. Some time, of course, necessarily elapsed before the new plantations could make themselves felt on the English markets; but eventually trade with this country commenced, and has been, and is still, steadily on the increase. Climate and soil seem in many cases even more favourable than those of China, and perhaps more scientific treatment has had its effect also. At all events, Indian teas are beating their rivals in quality, and running them hard in price. The cultivation has been taken up in several parts of India, and three or four principal kinds are now always to be found in these warehouses in large quantities. Souchong fetches 1s. 2d. to 1s. 9d. or 1s. 10d. per lb.; Pekoe 1s. 6d. to 2s. 3d. or 2s. 4d.; and a kind known as "Fannings"—a broken tea winnowed from Pekoe—sells at from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 4d. The first small consignment of Indian teas arrived in this country in 1839, when eight chests of Assam were offered in London. So great was the sensation created that it realised prices varying from 16s. to 34s. a pound in the wholesale market, the whole of the eight chests fetching an average of 24s. 6d.

Sales, of course, are not effected on these premises; but before we leave the place it may be noted, as a curious illustration of the jealousy with which the official eye regards any possible evasion of the Custom dues, that the sweepings of these floors are not thrown away with ordinary dust and rubbish. There is a huge chimney down in the London Docks, and there is another down on the knuckle of the "C Jetty" of the Victoria Docks, expressly built for destroying all such refuse and contraband articles of various kinds. The Victoria Docks furnace is still going, and waste tea, and odds and ends of tobacco, by the ton are every week consumed in this, "the Queen's tobacco pipe." The waste tea of the Cutler Street Warehouses and the London Docks used to be similarly consumed at the other furnace referred to, but an unusual quantity of it on one occasion set the chimney on fire, and as this mode of disposing of it was generally found tedious and troublesome, the plan is now adopted of carrying it in barges down towards the Nore and flinging it into the sea, of course under the inspection of a Custom House officer.

Mincing Lane is the centre of the actual buying and selling of tea. The trade migrated there when the East India Company was abolished, and the first sale of tea in this lane took place on the 19th of August, 1834. The central point of interest for the trade is the Commercial Sale Rooms, in one of which sales by auction are going on more or less all the week, but especially on Tuesdays. As we have said, the packages of tea cannot, of course, be removed from the bonded warehouses until the duty has been paid. But samples may be drawn and catalogues made up, without payment of duty. There is nothing especially noteworthy in the proceedings of this sale-room. A casual visitor will probably be more interested in the wonderful maze of business premises in which he will be pretty sure to lose himself before he finds "Number 3 on the second floor." It is a perfect warren of auction-rooms for the sale of one thing and another; and there are, we fancy, very few places in London better calculated to convey to a stranger a

\* A circular more than a century old now lies before us, which we give verbatim as showing the mode of doing business and price of teas in those days:—

"London, May 8th, 1760.  
"Sir,—The sale of teas finished this day has fixed our prices, upon the lowest terms as under, shall be very much oblig'd by your commands, and am for self and co., sir, your very humble servant, Thos. Elton.  
"Very best Bohea 5s. 1d.; Congou 8s.; Congou fine 8s. 9d. & 9s. 6d.; Souchong, 8s. 6d.; Souchong fine 9s. 6d.; Green 8s.; Green fine 9s. 6d. & 11s.; Hyson do. fine do. Gunpow'd. fine 11s. to 18s.  
"P.S.—The company have declared a further sale of teas for the 12 June next."

striking idea of the vast ramifications of London trade than some of these bewildering clusters of sale-rooms and offices, such as this, in the midst of which the wholesale tea trade is carried on.

The tea sale-room is rather a dull apartment, with seats ranged one above the other, after the manner of a lecture-room, the auctioneer's desk occupying the place of the lecturer's table. Perhaps a hundred individuals are lodged about the seats, each with a catalogue and a quill pen, with which, apparently, the price at which every lot is knocked down is marked as the sale proceeds. Only a few seem to be bidding, and they form a noisy cluster down close under the auctioneer, whose functions do not seem to comprise any eulogy on what he has to sell, for the simple reason, we presume, that he really knows nothing about the various lots but what the catalogue tells him. The number of the lot is cried, a bid is made, and advance upon it is always by a farthing a pound, and when not another farthing can be got, down comes the hammer. The disinterested spectator cannot but remark to himself the curious phenomenon of an auctioneer who seems to be under not the slightest temptation to puff his goods. The samples have, of course, been open to examination for some time at the broker's office, and tea-tasters have exercised a delicacy of connoisseurship which, in some cases, seems to be almost as well worthy of ranking among the fine arts as the skill which constitutes a man a first-rate judge of painting or an able musical critic. Not one in a thousand, we have heard it said, has the requisite delicacy of palate for a first-rate tea-taster. The man who has this delicacy, and has proved his skill in discriminating the finest shades of flavour, can often command his £800 or £1,000 a year. It is said that there are some Chinamen in the tea districts who will tell, with the utmost certainty, not only what particular kind of tea is placed before them, but the locality in which it is grown, and this merely by tasting. A great delicacy of palate—with which some are naturally gifted, just as others are endowed with great delicacy of ear or keenness of eye—cultivated by long practice, is the qualification of a good tea-taster. It is a great drawback to the good salaries that men thus gifted can command that the continual taking of tea into the mouth—though it is never swallowed—often works serious mischief to the constitution. This is more particularly the case with new teas. There is a volatile oil in the new tea that is accredited with the mischief, and Chinese tasters, who have of course more to do with the freshest of the article than those in London, are said to be great sufferers. In China, we are told, it is a common thing for tasters to throw up lucrative posts, and to retire with shattered constitutions.

As an illustration of the importance of experience in buying, it may be remarked that the Chinaman is very clever in counterfeiting particular "chops" of tea of high-class repute. The "chop," as we have said, is a parcel of tea all of one quality, and may comprise 600 to 700 chests, throughout the whole of which no variation will be found. These chops are made up from season to season always alike, and certain "chop marks" appropriated to them are recognised as a kind of guarantee of quality. The Chinese sometimes endeavour to pass off inferior kinds by giving them the appearance and the marks of teas of established repute, and so cleverly do they accomplish this that they are not to be detected by

the eye. A skilful taster, however, will detect the imposition immediately, and sometimes can do so by merely examining an infusion and without tasting. We may add that when a tea has been tasted, the complexion of the leaf, its exact colour, its size and curl, and other peculiarities, are all indicated by hieroglyphic signs attached to the sample. By glancing over these marks an estimate of the value of the tea may at any time be made.

A great revolution has taken place in the conveyance of tea to this country within the past quarter of a century. This is mainly due to the substitution of steamers for sailing-vessels, and in part, also, to the opening of the Suez Canal. In the earlier days of the tea trade our supplies came in what were considered to be the magnificent East Indiamen. After them came the fast Clyde clippers, which in their turn were superseded by steamships. The sailing-vessels, even the best of them, could not bring more than from eight hundred thousand to a million pounds weight, and they were, of course, very much at the mercy of the winds for their speed. Whole fleets of them would sometimes be collected in the Downs waiting for a favourable wind. At that time, and, indeed, up till quite recently, a considerable money-prize used to be awarded to the first ship with the new season's teas, and this ocean race used to be quite an exciting event in the shipping world and the subject of not a little betting. To be in with the first cargo is still a point of ambition of course, and, indeed, shipowners usually stipulate for additional freight if their vessels come first or second into port; but the prize, we understand, has been discontinued, and a good deal less interest in the matter is manifested now that the length of a voyage has been reduced to something approaching certainty. Instead of eight hundred thousand or a million pounds, which the best of the Clyde clippers could carry, the finest of the steamers now engaged in the trade will come into port with three million pounds weight of tea on board. But with all our fine vessels and vast trade we get of the very best of China teas little or none. The first and best pick of the Moning Congous, we are assured, goes to the Russians, who are always eager to buy it at a good price.

We have given the prices at about which a few of the principal teas are knocked down in the auction-room. These prices, it must be understood, are for teas on which the duty is as yet unpaid—or as they say in the trade, they are the "short prices." It may be worth while to give something like an approximate idea of the division of profits between the bonded warehouse and the tea-table. Take a Kaisow tea, which sells in the auction-room for 11*d.* a pound. To this must be added, say, a farthing for brokerage, a farthing to a penny for warehouse charges, and 6*d.* per pound duty, which, of course, is the same on all sides. This brings up the cost to the wholesale dealer to say 1*s.* 5½*d.* The wholesale profit, in a general way, will be about a penny a pound, so that the retail dealer will get the elevenpenny tea for 1*s.* 6¾*d.*, and to this he himself will be pretty sure to add another 6*d.* The tea which sells for 11*d.* in Mincing Lane will thus be supplied to consumers at something over two shillings. The retailer's share of the profit looks satisfactory, but most shopkeepers have their own modes of "blending" not only flavours, but prices also, and on some of the higher-priced teas profits are, no doubt, often considerably higher.





## THE TROUBLES OF A CHINAMAN.

BY JULES VERNE.

### CHAPTER XII.—LOCOMOTION UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

THE Celestials might well be puzzled by the stranger who now for a time pursued a hurried way among them. He was a traveller knowing not to-day where to-morrow would find him. He went to hotels, but tarried only for a few hours. He made his way to restaurants, but only to take the hastiest of meals. He was lavish with his money, but he spent it only to expedite his progress.

Manifestly he was not a merchant on a business tour; as clearly he was not a mandarin charged with some urgent mission; he was not an artist in search of the beauties of nature; neither was he a *savant* hunting out ancient documents from the religious houses; he was not a student on his way to the pagoda of examiners to get a degree; not a Buddhist priest on his round of inspection of the altars consecrated at the roots of the holy banyan; and not a pilgrim making his way to pay his vows upon one of the five sacred mountains. Ki-Nan, the traveller, remained everywhere a mystery.

The client of the Centenarian seemed to have no design but to keep up a perpetual locomotion. Accompanied by Craig and Fry, who were ever on the alert, and followed by Soon, who was ever disgusted at the exertions he was called upon to make, he pushed rapidly onwards with the double object of escaping, and of yet seeking the indiscoverable Wang.

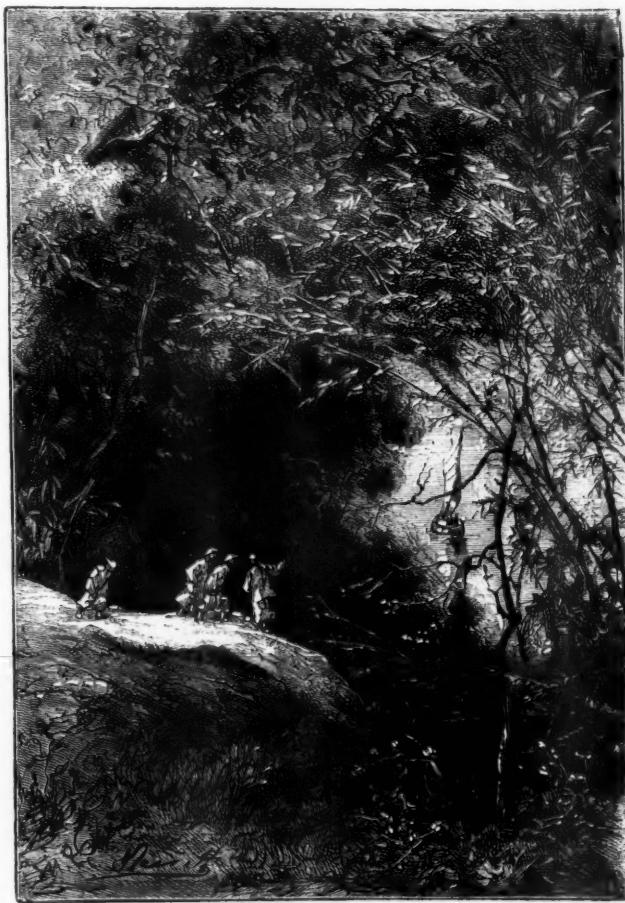
On the one hand he was endeavouring to find a distraction from his own perplexities, on the other he was trying to evade the danger that threatened him, by keeping incessantly in motion, on the principle that a bird on the wing is harder to hit than a bird on a bush.

From Nanking they proceeded by one of the fast American steamboats, that, like floating hotels, convey passengers up the Blue River, and, after a run of sixty hours, landed at Han-Kow, at the confluence of the Yang-tse-Kiang and its important affluent the Han-Kiang.\* They had scarcely noticed, far less admired, the fantastic rock, "the little orphan," which stands solitary in the middle of the stream, and is crowned by a temple constantly served by Buddhist priests.

At Han-Kow Kin-Fo consented to rest for half a day. Ruins, utterly irreparable, in many places, were the tokens of the violence of the old Tai-Ping, but neither in the commercial town itself, which is a mere annex to the prefecture of Han-Yang-Foo on the

right bank, nor in Woo-Chang-Foo, the capital of the province of Hou-Pe, on the left, was there to be found any trace of Wang. Nor was there anywhere a repetition of the mysterious letters that had caught Kin-Fo's eye on the tomb at Nanking.

\* In the south of China rivers are distinguished by the termination "Kiang," in the north by "Ho."



THROUGH THE RIVER VALLEY.

If Craig and Fry had been men anxious to turn their expedition to account and to gain much intimate acquaintance either with Chinese places or Chinese

because the dangers of the river were less than those of the road, and it was a mode of travelling that secured them greater facilities for keeping an effectual watch. Soon was still better satisfied. The steamboat life suited him exactly. He had no walking, and no exertion in the way of work, for Craig and Fry still persisted in undertaking all personal attendance upon his master; he slept all day long in a snug corner of the ship, taking, however, the most conscientious care to awake punctually at luncheon, dinner, tea, and supper, the good cooking of which he thoroughly appreciated.

In a day or so afterwards, an observable change in the ordinary food betokened that they had entered a more northerly latitude. In the place of rice, corn was served up in the form of unleavened bread, which, eaten fresh from the oven, is extremely palatable. Soon, a true southerner, was the first to miss his customary diet, and deplored the absence of the rice which he enjoyed, tossing it, by means of chop-sticks, into his capacious mouth. Give him his tea and his rice, and he was satisfied; after all, he cared more for them than for the fine cookery of the hotel-ship.

They had, in fact, entered the corn district, the character of the country being more undulated, and hills were to be seen on the horizon crested with fortifications erected under the dynasty of Ming. The river ceased to be bounded by artificial banks, but flowed between its natural shores, allowing the stream to be wider, but rendering it more shallow.

At the prefecture of Yuen-Lo-Foo the steamer lay to for a few hours, close to the custom-house, to take in fuel. Kin-Fo would not go on shore. Why should he? There was nothing in the place that he cared to see; his single aim now was to bury himself in the heart of China, where, if he did not come across Wang, Wang would not come across him.

Beyond Yuen-Lo-Foo lay two towns, facing each other, on opposite sides of the river; one being Fan-Tcheng, with a large and bustling population, the other the prefecture of Siang-Yang-Foo, the residence of the authorities, but a place much more dead than alive. The river took an abrupt turn to the north, in the direction of Lao-Ho-Kow, where it ceased to be navigable.

From this point onwards, travelling became altogether a different matter. The "smooth rolling road" of the river was henceforth to be exchanged for the rough and ill-kept highways of the land, and the gentle gliding of the steamboat had to be surrendered for the bumping and jolting of the primitive vehicles which still seem to satisfy the requirements of the Celestials. Poor Soon! what a prospect for him! the change was to him little short of a calamity! He would have to trudge along, and had nothing to expect but fatigue for himself and chastisement from his master!

To own the truth, it was indeed no enviable post for any one to have to follow Kin-Fo in the wild peregrination on which he had set out. He had made up his mind to keep moving on; the mode of convey-



ON THE CENTRAL PLAINS.

customs, they would have been very grievously disappointed, as the celerity of all their proceedings barely allowed the opportunity for making the briefest note. It must be owned, however, that as they were not garrulous, so they were not curious. It probably did not matter much that they very rarely spoke to each other. Their thoughts were so precisely alike that any conversation between them would have been little otherwise than a monologue. They had no interest to devote to the architectural peculiarities of the place; they admired neither the broad straight streets, nor the handsome houses, nor the shady promenades of the European quarter; still less had they the discrimination to observe that double aspect of character common to the majority of Chinese cities which appear as it were dead in the centre, but alive in all their surroundings.

As the steamboat was about to proceed up the Han-Kiang, navigable as far as Lao-Ho-Kow, another hundred miles, he determined to take his passage on board for the rest of the way. The two men in charge were very glad of the decision, chiefly

ance was not for a moment to be a consideration. From town to town he hurried, from province to province he made his way; at one time in a sort of chest nailed on to an axle, with the wheels attached most questionably to its ends, drawn by a couple of stubborn mules, and covered by a tilting that was proof neither against sun nor rain; at another time in a mule-chair, a kind of hammock suspended between two bamboo poles, in which he had to lie at full length, and submit to be pitched and tossed about with as much violence as if he were exposed to the fury of a boisterous sea.

Craig and Fry, mounted on wretched donkeys, the motion of which was scarcely less torturing than that of the mule-chair, rode one on each side, a duly constituted body-guard. Grumbling and growling, obliged to follow on foot, Soon came on behind.

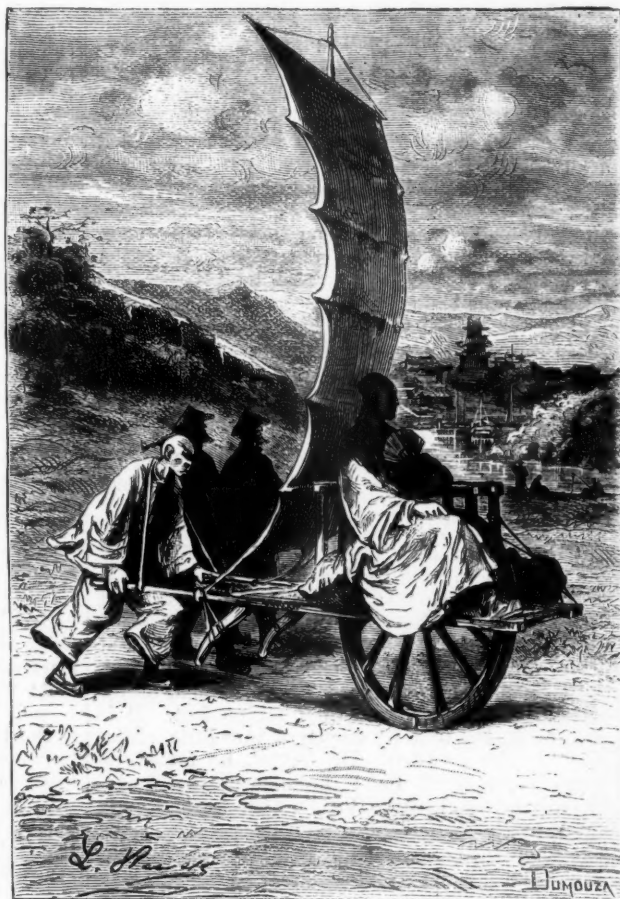
At a later stage the mules and donkeys were dismissed, and it was mounted on horses, albeit of the sorriest order, that Kin-Fo and his party entered Si-Ngan-Foo, the ancient capital of the Central Empire, and the residence of the Emperor of the Tang dynasty. Many and bare, however, were the plains they had to cross; long and severe the fatigue they had to endure before they reached this remote province of Shen-See.

The heat had been scarcely endurable. It was the month of May, and the latitude was about the same as that of southern Spain. A fine yellow dust rose in the clouds from the unballasted highways, at once tinting the atmosphere with an unwholesome fog and covering the travellers from head to foot. It was the "loess" district, which presents a geological formation peculiar to the north of China, and which has been described by Léon Rousset as "neither earth nor rock, but rather stone in that transitional state in which it has not yet had time to get solid."

Nor was the personal risk they ran by any means insignificant; the police themselves are in perpetual dread of the assassin's knife; and in a region where the people are afraid to walk by night in the towns, because the ti-paocs give every rascal free field for action, it may well be understood that there was no security in the open country. Several times in the narrow defiles formed by the loess strata some suspicious-looking stragglers met them; but if they had any evil designs, the sight of the revolvers in the waistbands of Craig and Fry was probably enough to warn them off. Still it could not be concealed that the two men in charge were very anxious; they were quite aware that the consequences to the Centenarian, in the service of which they were engaged, would be just the same whether Kin-Fo should be killed by Wang or by any chance highwayman they might encounter on the way. Nor was it to be denied that Kin-Fo was in no small degree alarmed on his own account. He was really solicitous for his own safety; he had taken a new view of life, and clung to it more than ever; so that, as Craig and Fry, without much regard to logic, expressed their opinion, "he would have died to save it."

Nothing could be more improbable than that any trace of Wang should be discovered at Si-Ngan-Foo. It was precisely the spot to which no Tai-Ping would be likely to resort. At the time of the revolution the rebels had never succeeded in scaling its substantial wall, and a strong garrison of the Manchows had always occupied it. If it could be supposed that the philosopher was in search of archaeological curiosities, or was interested in the mysterious epigraphs, the number of which in the museum has caused it to be designated "the forest of tablets," he might have been looked for in the locality; otherwise there was every reason why he should avoid it.

The town is an important centre of business between Central Asia, Thibet and Mongolia, and China. It might well detain a traveller for a time, but Kin-Fo took his departure immediately after his arrival. Continuing his route northwards, he followed the valley of the Hoey-Ho, a stream of which the waters are tinged with yellow, communicated by the loess through which it makes its way. He passed Kao-Lin-Sien and Sing-Tong-Sien and reached Hoa-



CHINESE WHEELBARROW CARRIAGE.

Choo, the scene of a terrible Mussulman insurrection in 1860. Thence afterwards, by an arduous journey, sometimes by carriage, sometimes by boat, he arrived



at the fortress of Tong-Konan, at the confluence of the Hoey-Ho and Hoang-Ho.

The Hoang-Ho is the renowned Yellow River. Rising in the north, it flows through the eastern provinces into the Yellow Sea, which, however, is no more yellow than the Black Sea is black or the Red Sea red. Honoured with the name of the imperial colour, it is no doubt credited with a celestial origin, but its merits are somewhat qualified by the additional appellation which it bears of "the vexation of China," a title which has been bestowed upon it on account of the destructive inundations that have even affected the Imperial Canal.

As Tong-Konan was not a commercial city, but a military station, ordinarily occupied by a detachment of the Manchow Tartars, a not unimportant part of the Chinese army, Kin-Fo's companions indulged a hope that he might wait there for a few days, provided he could find a comfortable hotel; and it probably would have been so had it not been for an unlucky blunder on the part of Soon. Entirely off his guard, the stupid fellow gave his master's real name at the custom-house, forgetting altogether the assumed name of Ki-Nan. It was an act of carelessness that cost him a good piece of his pigtail, but the news he had communicated flew like wildfire. Kin-Fo had come; the man who was going to live to a hundred was actually in the town. A crowd was quickly gathered round the traveller, who forthwith took to his heels, and, followed by the inseparables, never paused in his flight until he sank exhausted in an obscure little village nearly twenty miles from Tong-Konan, and in which he hoped at least to secure his incognito.

The discomfiture which Soon had brought upon himself by his unwary slip was very considerable. His master had been so annoyed by his servant's mistake that he had snipped off a very much larger piece of the pigtail than he had intended, and the fragment that remained to the culprit made him an object of ridicule to everybody in the place. The very boys in the streets pursued and hooted him. It may well be imagined that poor Soon longed heartily for an end to such a journey.

But where could the end be looked for? Was not Kin-Fo resolved to carry out the purpose he had announced to Mr. Biddulph, and to keep going "straight ahead"?

In the retired little place in which refuge had been found there were neither horses, donkeys, carriages, nor mule-chairs; and yet it was necessary at once to proceed. The prospect before them seemed to allow no alternative but to walk. This was not at all according to Kin-Fo's taste, for, however determined he might be to go forward, it had never entered into his calculation to go far on foot. It is not to be denied that he displayed very little philosophy on the occasion. He fretted, he fumed, he blamed those about him; he blamed the world, although he might have known that he had only himself to blame; he sighed after the past, in which he had nothing to disturb him; he declared that, if troubles and annoyances were necessary to make a man appreciate comforts, he had surely had troubles and annoyances enough for a lifetime. And what had he not witnessed? Had he not seen men without a sapeck in the world going on their way perfectly happy? Had he not seen labourers toiling on merry and gay over their furrows in the fields? Had he not seen the artisans plying their tools and singing

the merriest of songs? Perhaps, after all, it was work that was wanted to give genuine happiness to existence. At any rate, he came to the conclusion that his own was a hard and bitter lot.

Meanwhile Craig and Fry had ransacked the village for a conveyance. They had been reduced to the very extremity of despair, when at last they managed to secure a vehicle that would just convey a single passenger; but though they found the vehicle, they were not fortunate enough to get the means for moving it.

The carriage in question was neither more nor less than an ordinary wheelbarrow of the country—the wheelbarrow of Pascal, probably invented long before his time by the discoverers of gunpowder and of the mariner's compass. In these barrows the wheel is not placed at the extremity of the shafts, but in the middle of them, working underneath the body. The truck part is thus divided into two compartments, one of which may be assigned to a passenger, the other to his luggage. The driver pushes in the ordinary way from behind, and, like the driver of a hansom cab, does not impede the front view of his fare. As an appliance that is frequently found of great service, a square sail can be hoisted on a mast, and when the wind is in a favourable quarter, the impulse thus given to locomotion is occasionally considerably greater than the most impatient traveller could desire.

Not to be hired, the wheelbarrow with all its appurtenances had to be purchased; and all arrangements being duly made, Kin-Fo took his place inside.

"Now then, Soon!" he said.

"Quite ready, sir!" answered Soon, taking measures for stowing himself in the vacant compartment of the barrow.

"No, no; the luggage goes there!" shouted Kin-Fo.

"And I?" asked the astounded valet.

"To the shafts, man, to the shafts!" cried his master.

"How? what? where?" stammered out the poor fellow, utterly bewildered, his legs already tottering under him like a worn-out race-horse.

"Do you hear me?" said Kin-Fo, making his first two fingers gape out and shut like a pair of scissors, a gesture which Soon understood only too well.

Without another word the servant passed the barrow-yoke over his shoulders, and grasped the handles at the shaft-ends. The wind was in the right direction, and the sail was accordingly hoisted; Craig and Fry took their places on either side, and a start was made at a brisk trot.

At first Soon's rage and mortification were unbounded at finding himself thus summarily reduced to the level of a cab-horse, and he flinched at the arduous task before him; but his humiliation was qualified when he found Craig and Fry willing to take their turn at pushing, and the actual toil was so materially lightened by the action of the southerly wind, that the work of the man in the shafts was really little more than that of a helmsman.

In this fashion, walking when he wanted to stretch his legs, and riding when he was tired, Kin-Fo pushed on towards the north. Avoiding Honan-Foo and Cafong, he followed the course of the Imperial Canal, which, until twenty years ago, when the Yellow River resumed its ancient bed, formed a highway many hundred miles in length between the

tea district and the capital. Passing through Tsinan and Ho-Kien, he entered the province of Pe-Chi-Li, and proceeded towards Peking.

On his way he passed through Tien-Tsin, a large place of some four hundred thousand inhabitants, defended by an entrenched wall and two forts. The wide harbour of this city is formed by the junction of the Pei-Ho and the Imperial Canal, and accommodates ships that bring business to the amount of some millions annually, the exports being jujubes, nenuphar-leaves, and tobacco from Tartary, with other oriental products; the imports being of a very miscellaneous character, sandal-wood, minerals, wool, and notably calico from Lancashire.

Interesting, however, as was the place, Kin-Fo had no intention of stopping there; he neither spared time to visit the renowned Pagoda of Infernal Punishment, nor did he take a single stroll along the animated "Street of Lanterns;" he did not take a meal at the celebrated restaurant of "Harmony and Friendship," kept by the Mussulman Leon-Lao-Ki, whose wines, in spite of Mussulman law, are in high repute; and he declined the ceremony of presenting his red card at the palace of Li-Tchong-Tang, since 1870 Viceroy of the Province, member of the Privy Council, and of the High Council of the Empire,

and who wears the yellow robe, and bears the title of Fei-Tze-Chao-Pao.

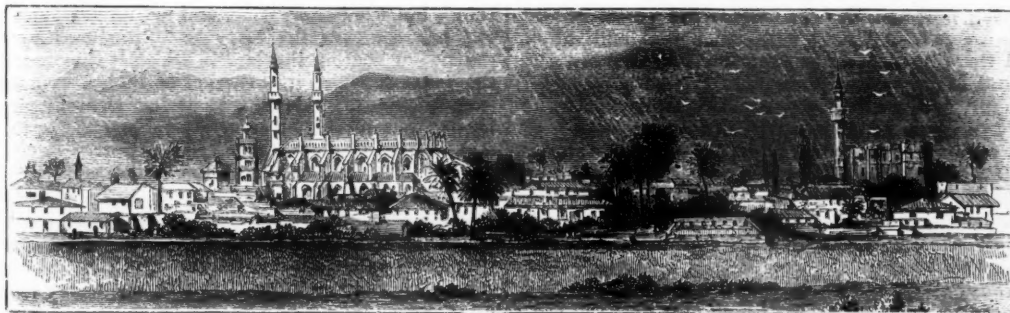
None of these things had any attraction for Kin-Fo, who hurried on without pausing. He passed along the quays, where salt was piled up high, sack over sack. He crossed the suburbs, the English and American quarters, the race-course; he made his way onwards through vineyards and market-gardens, rich in their supplies of fruit and vegetables. Again he reached the open country with its fields of sorghum, barley, and sesame, traversing the open plains where hares, partridges, quails in thousands fell victims to the sparrow-hawk and falcon.

There was now before them a long paved road of nearly sixty miles, bordered on one side by many varieties of trees, fringed on the other by the tall rushes that overhang the river. It would bring them straight to Peking, but they halted on the way at Tong-Choo, Kin-Fo none the worse for his undignified journey, Craig and Fry fresh as when they started, Soon limping and dusty, but most of all concerned at the diminution of his pigtail, reduced to the measurement of but a few inches.

It was now the 19th of June. There were yet six days of suspense. Hitherto, however, there was no trace of Wang. Where could he be?

## CYPRUS.

I.



NICOSIA.

THE occupation of Cyprus was effected so quietly that it has been almost forgotten in the busy march of events. Apart from disputed military and political questions, it is worth considering from a social point of view.\* In the rest of our empire our subjects are as a rule Asiatics, savages, or our own countrymen; in Cyprus we have to govern a race allied to that which gave the earliest beginnings of civilisation to Europe, which attained the highest pitch of intellectual development ever reached by any people, whose language is at the present day nearly that in which Homer sang, and whose dress, customs, and sur-

roundings are much the same as they were in Homer's time. Nowhere else do we possess Greek subjects, and nowhere else can we study in our own empire a civilisation so primitive and so interesting.

On arriving from England the view is undoubtedly disappointing. The south-western portion, that first usually seen, rises up gradually from the sea to the rounded summit of Troodos, the ancient Mount Olympus, scantily covered with verdure as far as can be seen, and showing no signs of the deep and fertile valleys which cut up the mass, and constitute the chief beauty of the island. On approaching Larnaca, the invariable place of landing, the character of the country changes, and the most uninviting part is seen in all its hideousness. A baked, dusty plain runs from the shore to a low range of bare white limestone hills, with a few white towers and small clumps of trees scattered over it marking the villages. Larnaca lies, white and glaring, on a low beach, and shows a row of one-storeyed houses, a minaret or two, and a few tall palms. The gardens are hid behind the mud-brick house-fronts, except for an occasional

\* We are indebted for this brief but comprehensive sketch of Cyprus and its people to an officer of the Royal Engineers on duty in the island. His account will be perused with interest even by those who have read the works issued by professional book-writers like Mr. Hepworth Dixon or experienced travellers like Sir Samuel Baker. The last-named explorer took wheeled vehicles with him from England, but they were of limited service in a country with few roads. His report of the condition and prospects of the new possession is rather sombre. The occupation of the island being only provisional, there is an insecurity which hinders that investment of English capital which might develop the resources of the country. Sir Samuel Baker offers many valuable suggestions, but they are not likely to be carried out, as they would have been had Cyprus been ceded or sold by Turkey to England, instead of being held by an uncertain and unprofitable military tenure.

peep of palms and orange-trees through an open door; the sea-front consists of a rough and narrow quay; the streets and bazaars are narrow, unpaved, and filthy. Such is the town that welcomes the English to Cyprus, and that has caused and will cause so much disappointment to all, from the troops that were pitchforked into it last July, to the first batch of tourists bold enough to follow Mr. Cook into the island.

The drive to Nicosia, which is probably the first expedition taken into the country, will only deepen this unfavourable impression; and as the experiences of many are confined to Larnaca, Nicosia, and a hot tramp through the dusty Messaoria, or central plain of the island, to Famagusta, a depressing and decayed spot, though interesting historically, we can in a measure account for some of the abuse heaped upon Cyprus.

Larnaca and Nicosia are the only places connected by a road passable for carriages, though others are being brought into the road system of the island as rapidly as possible, and in consequence all travelling is done by mule or pony, while mules or camels carry the baggage. Hotels are unknown out of Larnaca, and if the traveller objects to dirt and animal life at night, he will probably not take up his quarters in native villages, but carry a tent, and pitch it near a stream or well at the approach of evening. Days passed thus in travelling will not easily be forgotten, if the traveller has not been in the East before. All the burning day the shrill cicadas ring in one's ears as one tramps over the plain, deep in brown dust, passing now and then an oasis round a well or two, and a few mud houses with patches of cultivation, and the sun beats down from the cloudless sky with an intensity unknown at home. Darkness comes on, happily, earlier than in northern latitudes, and with little twilight. All night packs of pariah dogs howl and fight for scraps of offal, and the gaunt form of one may skulk like a wolf across the door of the tent, as one lies awake, clearly seen in the brilliant moonlight, which gives the distant mountains and the dusty plain a peculiar beauty and softness they much lack by day.

Those who penetrate into the mountains that cover the centre and west of the island will probably give a better account of it. This part consists of hills rising gradually from the sea on the south and west to the mountains in the centre, which drop again rather suddenly into the plain on the north. These mountains vary from 3,000 to 6,280 feet, the latter being the height of Mount Troodos, which stands about half-way along the range, and consists of many spurs, covered with vines, and separated by deep fertile valleys smiling with cultivation and villages.

In this part of the island the shore is, as a rule, low, and the land rises gradually as it recedes from it, till it reaches a height of about 1,300 feet about ten miles from the sea, when a sudden drop of 500 feet occurs into the next region, which differs widely from the first belt of country in its character. The latter is well covered with dark-green carob-trees, which give the shore a pleasant wooded appearance from the sea. The hills are uncultivated and grown over with bushes, and form the great grazing-ground of the island for sheep and goats. There are a few towns and villages between the hills and the sea, of which Baffo is the most interesting, having been the capital of the island in Roman days, and the site of the great temple of Venus in earlier times. Limassol

is the most important now, being the great outlet for the wine which this region produces in great quantity, though of poor quality, and for the carobs or locust beans. It consists of a long line of low white houses close to the sea, a tumbledown Turkish fort, a couple of minarets marking the two mosques, and behind rises the massive Venetian fortress, built of yellow stone, now used as a prison.

The narrow street which runs parallel to the shore is the chief scene of business. Casks of wine are being rolled along to the lighters, which will take them to the caïques, or small merchant ships, tossing half a mile off in the roadstead, for there is no harbour, and a heavy swell is often driven on to the beach by the south-east wind. The streets are paved, and cleaner than is usual in a Cypriot town, and the inhabitants are rather better off than elsewhere, owing to the commerce in wine and carobs with Marseilles, Alexandria, and Syria, several merchants residing in the town, as well as consuls of different countries.

Beyond the first range of hills the face of the country changes entirely. The hills are bare, and of white limestone, covered, however, in summer, with the fresh green of the vines—for this is the heart of the wine country, where the famous Commanderia is produced, a very sweet wine, of which a Venetian governor in the sixteenth century made a present to Queen Elizabeth. It was a bottle of this wine, carefully preserved in the cellars of Windsor Castle, that the Queen opened last July to celebrate the annexation of the island. The common wine, or *krasi*, is a rough but wholesome wine, and not unpleasant when one has got over the tarry taste, produced by the practice of coating the jars in which it is stored, and the skins in which it is carried on mules, with pitch from the fir-tree. It is sold at less than a penny a bottle, and is chiefly exported to Marseilles, to be manufactured into claret.

The hills are separated by broad valleys, well covered with prosperous villages, and watered by streams which flow often two or three hundred feet below the bottom of the valley in the deep canons they have eaten out in the course of ages. These streams are fed from springs high up on the mountains, which do not run dry in summer, and are of the greatest use to the villagers, for aqueducts branch off continually along the steep sides of the chasms, and convey water which, after turning mills to grind the barley and wheat for bread, lead the water over the numerous small patches of barley, potatoes, and cotton, and through the fruit-orchards which surround each village. The unirrigated upland tracts between the villages are devoted to vines, which climb up the sides of the hills on terraces kept up by stone walls.

A country village in one of these remote valleys presents a very typical picture of Cypriot life. There will be twenty to a hundred houses in the village, all one-storeyed, flat-roofed, and built of the stone found close by, with mud and straw for mortar. There will be a couple of rooms in each house, with a floor of well-trodden earth, windows consisting of openings closed with wooden shutters, for glass is unknown, a ceiling of brushwood laid on fir rafters, reaching from the wall to a large beam down the centre of the room, and a flat roof of earth and clay laid on this brushwood, and well rolled, especially during rain, to prevent the water soaking through; in fact, the moment a shower comes on each house-

wife  
for t  
with  
every  
bour  
coup  
roll  
and  
deal  
beam  
cage  
axe  
shar  
artic  
whic  
whe  
mou  
wine  
hid.  
barl  
yard  
are  
T  
thei  
vine  
of p  
wor  
and  
busy  
brea  
of t  
dye  
to b  
whe  
spin  
or n  
not  
litt  
vine  
harv  
mul  
all,  
hard  
T  
rega  
Plou  
field  
mus  
whe  
be  
mad  
field  
mus  
afte  
pack  
In  
mul  
spri  
bea  
of t  
T  
this  
har  
carr  
the  
thei  
to a  
beg  
and  
thei



wife flies on to the roof, seizes the wooden roller kept for the purpose, and, regardless of getting wet, rolls with great vigour, keeping up, as women will do in every country, an animated discussion with her neighbour on the next roof. The furniture consists of a couple of wooden bedsteads, where the whole family roll themselves up each night, clothes and all, wet and dirty as they may be, a few rough chairs, and a deal table. There is a large fireplace, and from the beams, black with smoke, hang onions, sausages, a cage full of cheeses, the men's heavy overcoats, an axe and a reaping-hook, and a few wooden plough-shares. At the back of the room is a mass of domestic articles—the loom on which the cotton-stuff is woven which clothes both men and women, the spinning-wheels and distaffs, ox-yokes and goads, and enormous jars of red earthenware holding last year's wine—the very same in which the forty thieves were hid. Among all, the chickens are pecking at the barley-sacks, and running in and out of the dirty yard at the entrance of the house, where the mules are tied up and black pigs are revelling in the filth.

The family probably consists of a married couple, their parents, and their children. They own some vineyards, a couple of mules, a pair of oxen, a patch of potatoes, a barley-field, and an orchard. The work of agriculture is incessant all the year round, and there is plenty of household labour, so all are busy, but seem always cheerful. The women bake bread one day in the week in the oven in the corner of the yard; another day they wash the clothes or dye cotton-cloth with indigo. Every day water has to be drawn from the spring, food to be cooked, and, when not otherwise employed, they are occupied in spinning cotton, weaving the thread they have spun, or making clothes. Out of doors, too, the women are not idle. In the spring they arm themselves with little sickles and cut off last year's shoots from the vines, ready for the new sprouts. A month later the harvest of barley must be reaped and brought in on mules; then comes the cotton harvest, and last of all, in August, the vintage, when all must work hard.

The men too, though inclined to be idle and to regard the women as their drudges, have their work. Ploughs must be made and repaired, and the corn-fields ploughed and sown in the winter. The earth must be loosened between the rows of vines; and when the rains are over, ditches and aqueducts must be repaired, and those carried away by the floods made afresh, to bring the water on to the barley-fields. While the corn is ripening, fences and hedges must be made up to keep the cattle off them; and after the hard work of the vintage the wine must be packed in skins and carried to Limasool for export. In autumn the wood stack must be replenished by mule loads from the mountain; and trees felled in spring and drawn down the steep paths for use as beams for a new house, water-troughs for the spring of the village, or for an aqueduct in the fields.

The mules and oxen play an important part in this household economy. The former are strong and hard-working, and carry everything that has to be carried, from the wine to the town, and the corn to the mill, to the man and his family when they visit their relations in the next village or make a pilgrimage to an adjacent church on a holy day. The children begin early to work; looking after the flocks of sheep and goats is their chief occupation. All the summer they pasture them away on the mountain safe from the

crops below. A rude cottage and a pen for the flock make up the grazing farm, where the goats'-milk cheeses, the great staple of food in the country, are made, for milch cows are unknown.

The young goatherds, resting with their flock in the shade at noon, or whistling shrilly to call them home in the evening, form a picturesque feature of the mountains, and the traveller often blesses the little farm as he comes suddenly on to it, for it means a cool draught of milk and some bread and cheese, when all other supplies are far below him.

In spite of its uninviting appearance, an Englishman will always find true hospitality in a Cypriot village. As he passes up the dirty street the peasant coming home driving his great oxen before him, and leading a donkey laden with the plough and the yoke, will wish him good evening; the groups of women spinning and chattering at their doors or on the housetops will welcome him, and the best room in the best house will be put at his disposal. A gourd of wine will be put before him; raisins, figs, walnuts, and slices of cheese steeped in honey will be served, all on blue willow pattern plates, bearing, by the way, the mark of Staffordshire; and unless prevented in time, the hostess will insist on frying some eggs in the most execrable olive oil. The pleasure given to these simple people by accepting their hospitality is unbounded. They stare with all their eyes at the stranger, his clothes, and his way of eating; and a few words in their own language amuse them exceedingly, and are repeated from one to another with wonder. Money is of little value to them, and they will seldom accept it for services done; for these villages are self-supporting to a great extent.

As to food and drink, their chickens and pigs, olives, barley, fruit, and cheese give all they want. Wine can be had for the asking, and from it a spirit called *raki* is distilled. For clothing, the cotton they grow is spun, woven, and made up at home into all the garments both sexes require. These consist of a pair of enormously wide knickerbockers, almost like petticoats, hanging in wide folds to the knees, of dark-blue cotton. The shirt is of cotton, as is also the short coat, which is often ornamented with gold braid or white embroidery. The men's dress is completed by a red fez, with a gay handkerchief bound round the lower part of it, and a pair of the Cypriot boots, reaching to the knee, of brown hide, with heavy soles studded with nails to resist the sharp rocks and stony paths. Their length protects the legs from the thorns, which are plentiful and very vicious. The women also wear these boots, and even the smallest children stump along in them. The petticoat is of cotton, as is also the body to it, both being often in one piece, like a "princess" dress in Europe, a gay handkerchief covers the head, and on grand feast-days a gold embroidered jacket is worn, and a necklace of gold coins hung round the neck.

## Varieties.

JAPANESE PROGRESS IN EDUCATION.—We have received from Professor Summers, of Osaka, formerly of the University of London, a short treatise on Education in Japan, intended for circulation among the intelligent natives. He says: "The Educational Department in Japan has made most laudable efforts to overcome the difficulty of obtaining students who shall speak English fluently and correctly. If we consider the

circumstances of the case, it is no matter of surprise that the schools which are the feeders of the two greatest seats of learning in Japan, the *Daigaku* (or University of Tokio) and the *Kobu Daigaku* (or Imperial College of Engineering), have been deficient in supplying pupils in sufficient numbers who know the English language so as to make it a ready instrument in their further and advanced studies. This language being the key to almost all the knowledge which is required under the new system, it is a matter of urgent importance that instruction in it should be most judiciously communicated, and should be of the best kind. No books of an inferior quality should be presented to the pupil's eye, no defective examples of colloquial English should fall on his ear. Exact translations should be required of native texts into English, and idiomatic English should be turned into idiomatic Japanese. The use of fine words should be carefully avoided, though they may happen to correspond exactly with an elegant form of expression in Japanese, until the plain English of everyday life has been mastered."

**VERSAILLES PROTESTANT CHURCH.**—In an obituary memoir of the eminent French statesman, M. Jules Favre, it was mentioned that his wife was a Protestant, and that he attended with her the Reformed Church at Versailles. In one of his latest letters, addressed to Pastor Bassa, he writes:—"I love your church because it defends and represents true liberty of thought on matters of religion. I love it in itself. Permit me to add that I love it also in you, its worthy pastor, and the eloquent defender of those high truths of which it is the palladium. I love it lastly because it is the church of my dear wife, and I should be a monster of ingratitude if I was not grateful to it for having guarded for me such a treasure." A new edifice for M. Bassa's congregation is to be built, and meanwhile he has been conducting Protestant worship in a room in the palace of Versailles. It is the ante-chamber of the room in which Louis XIV ended his life September 1st, 1715, and beneath the room in which he signed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

**"ON NE PASSE PAS."**—There used to be a picture popular in France of the "Petit Caporal" stopped by a sentry in camp. Napoleon was amused and pleased by the young soldier's firmness and obedience to orders, and made him a corporal. The Duke of Wellington was once refused admission into the commander-in-chief's office by a soldier new to London. King William the Fourth was kept waiting outside a certain part of Windsor Castle, through an official's ignorance of the royal identity. "You can't pass, old 'un," said he; "nobody's allowed to pass here after dark except the king and the lamp-lighter."

**FOG AND FROST.**—During the early weeks of this year frost and fog not unfrequently combined to give a strange appearance to the landscape, the trees and every projecting substance densely coated with rime. A more striking display of the effects of fog and frost was reported at sea. The steamers *Sarmatian* and *Prussia*, which arrived at Halifax, Nova Scotia, two days before Christmas-day, presented a remarkable appearance on their entry into harbour. The vessels were literally covered with ice. Not only had the hoar-frost adhered thickly to every part of the hull and rigging, but every spray from the sea had frozen instantly, so that the decks were from six inches to twelve inches thick in ice, and huge icicles were hanging from the rigging. The vessels had been caught in a frost fog on the Banks on the previous Sunday night, and the ice had formed so thick on the rigging and on every part of the ships as to constitute a serious danger to both. The thick fogs which prevail off the coasts of Newfoundland, and which, though they only occasionally extend to the shores of the island itself, being carried thither by south-easterly winds, have given the colony an unmerited character for "foginess," are caused by the meeting of the warm vapours emanating from the Gulf Stream with the cold air brought over by the Arctic current. The currents of hot and cold water and of hot and cold air meet some 200 or 300 miles south-east of Newfoundland, and the warm moisture-laden air, being suddenly chilled, forms a thick heavy fog. The steamers did not, fortunately, suffer any injury.

**THE AURORA BOREALIS.**—The following, by G. T. Temple, appears in the recent "Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society":—"Although the conjecture hazarded more than 160 years since, by Halley, that the aurora borealis was a magnetic phenomenon, has acquired empirical certainty from Faraday's discovery of the evolution of light by magnetic forces, as well as

from more recent observations, the following extracts, translated from a letter written by Herr Pastor emeritus H. M. F. Esmark, may perhaps be considered interesting, Herr Esmark having observed the meteorological conditions attending the display of the polar lights for many successive years: The aurora is never seen during extreme cold or northerly winds, but appears when an ordinary arctic temperature is raised by southerly and westerly winds, and is generally followed by snow. In the south-eastern part of Norway it seems to be especially caused by south-easterly winds, which are there very moist and rather warm. Its appearance is always accompanied by a falling barometer. In my opinion the phenomenon is due to the following causes: When a wind laden with warmth, moisture, and electricity comes in contact with a body of cold air, the moisture is converted into snow, the warmth and electricity are thereby released, and the aurora is the result of the disturbances. The northern lights cannot occur in very high latitudes, because the warm, moist air is cooled long before it reaches them. In this way Herr Esmark would account for the splendid appearance of the aurora in northern Norway, where the sea winds, bringing warmth, moisture, and electricity from the ocean, are met by cold land winds from the interior. MM. Lottin, Bravais, and Siljerstrom, who spent a winter at Besskop, in Alten (lat. seventy degs. N.), saw the northern lights 160 times in 210 nights. The most vivid aurora that I ever saw near Alten was towards midnight of the 12th of November, 1874. The flickering lights played about the masthead so like lightning that it was difficult to believe they were harmless. We had no snow, however, till the evening of the 14th, as we were entering Tromsø Harbour, and during the discharges of light the compass needle was wildly erratic."

**MR. MECCHI'S BALANCE-SHEET FOR 1879.**—Readers interested in agricultural pursuits will like to have the report of Mr. Mechi, of Tiptree Hall, after the abnormal season of 1879. Mr. Mechi writes from Tiptree Hall:—"This is the first time in the last fifteen years that my farm balance has been on the wrong side, and it proves to me how sad must be the financial position of a vast number of British agriculturists. Already 120 additional applicants for relief from the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution are on our new list; many of them have been in a most respectable station of life as agriculturists. Such a season, fatal to every crop and injurious to live stock, I never remember. The accounts show a deficiency of £750 8s. 3d. as compared with 1878. If the farm had been all of stiff clay the loss would have been at least £1,000, or fully £6 per acre; and this, too, on land well drained, highly manured, and deeply and cleanly cultivated—free from fences. But, fortunately, about 50 acres are of light soil, which considerably mitigated the loss. I have reason to believe that generally very light soils on porous subsoils have suffered much less than the dense clays, which this sad year must have proved ruinous to many farmers. Another saving clause was the picking of 33 acres of peas green for the London market, which saved me at least £150; for had they been left for harvest, like some I have saved for seed, the crop would have been comparatively worthless. The peas picked green netted £285 15s. after paying the following charges—picking, £85 2s. 10d.; railway carriage, £54 7s. 7d.; commission on selling, £48 9s. 1d.=£187 19s. 6d. Fifty odd pounds received from the Farmers' Insurance Company for damage by hail has been placed to the credit of the crops damaged. The live stock account is worse by £361 8s. 5d. than last year; for, owing to the great reduction in the price of lean and breeding stock, we had to value our sheep at £120 less than last year. Our lean cattle were bought in too dear and sold out too cheap. We lost 7 ewes and 11 lambs in 1879; an unusual quantity with us. The flock generally did not thrive so well as in 1878, owing to the wretched season and unripened vegetation."

**WOMEN'S HOTEL.**—The failure of the Great Stewart Hotel at New York was ascribed to the ladies preferring the society of gentlemen in a comfortable boarding-house to the luxuries of the hotel for women only. The "New York Times" says rather sneeringly that this is natural, and perhaps it is; but the facts are, that besides losing the society of men, the ladies were obliged to forego that of all pet animals and birds, and might neither have musical instruments nor sewing-machines in their rooms, nor hang pictures on the walls, nor keep their trunks and portmanteaus in their rooms, while (they complain) the wardrobe accommodation was insufficient. These regulations were, perhaps, in part, the reason of the failure of Stewart's Hotel, and not the impossibility of "running a hotel for women only."